Sector was 2.7 per cent in the second quarter of 2008-09 over the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

(d) No decision has been taken by the Planning Commission to revise the growth target.

(e) Does not arise.

Steps to reduce poverty level

2950. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are around 260 million poor people in the country whose income is less than Rs. 356.30 a month in villages and Rs. 638.60 a month in cities;

(b) if so, the steps that are proposed to be taken during the Eleventh Plan period (2007-12) to reduce the poverty level;

(c) the perspective planning till 2020 in this regard when the country hopes to become a developed country; and

(d) the long-term measures that are being adopted to remove poverty from India in a foreseeable future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) As per the latest estimates of the Planning Commission, the number of persons whose consumption level is less than Rs. 356.30 per capita per month in rural areas and Rs. 538.60 per capita per month in urban areas is estimated to be 301.7 million in the country for the year 2004-05 accounting for 27.5% of the population.

(b) The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) envisages reduction in the headcount ratio of consumption poverty by 10 percentage points. The Government is implementing a number of poverty alleviation programmes such as: National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Mid-day Meal Scheme, Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), etc.

(c) As per the document 'India Vision 2020' brought out by the Planning Commission in 2002, achievement of GDP growth rate of 8.5 to 9 per cent over the next 20 years would result in almost eliminating the incidence of poverty in the country.

(d) The strategy of the Government in reducing poverty includes asset generation programmes and increasing wage employment in order to raise the income levels of the poor. In addition, a number of anti-poverty programmes that have a direct impact on poverty reduction are being implemented.